

# Curricular Contents and Scope of Language Development in Secondary Level English under Different Boards

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose for creating and developing any curriculum for any board is to create and maintain a certain lesson strategies and areas for a certain group of students. Each board has a different aim and motto to teach their students according to their own thought and purpose. As for example - Central Board of Secondary Education or, CBSE tries to provide education among students beyond their various diversities; Council of Indian School Certificate Examination or, CISCE aims to serve the best quality of knowledge among the children reducing every barrier from their way while the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education or, WBBSE - as a state Board, tries to literate and educate all the children coming from every corner of the state. All of these Educational Boards fundamentally try to provide learner-centric teaching approaches, friendly environment of learning, multi-skilled educational system along with an effective curriculum prescribed for each group of students. In this context, the present study has tried to provide a synoptic view about the importance, effectiveness, and deficiency of the Secondary Level English curricula that are being followed by the CBSE and the WBBSE. A comparison between them - based on their curricular structures, evaluation processes and curriculum transaction methodologies etc. is documented here.

**KEYWORDS:** CBSE, WBBSE, learner-centric teaching, effective curriculum, Secondary Level English curricula

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In formal education, a curriculum is the planned way of interaction between students and teachers. These interactions are accomplished with instructional contents, materials, resources and the processes which help to fulfill educational objectives. Hence, curriculum is a type of sketch or outline. The entire procedure is completed within a limited period of time by both the teachers and the students through certain prescribed processes. This is done to accomplish certain purposes which are pre-fixed, maintained and observed by certain authorities.

Now, an educational board manages education in each state or country. In India, there are many Boards such as Central Board of Secondary Education (hereafter referred as 'CBSE'), Council of Indian School Certificate Examination (CISCE), and a host of state boards such as the West Bengal Board of

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Secondary Education (hereafter referred as 'WBBSE'). For each state, the state board takes care of the needs and standards of education and examination, based on the state's socio-economic and cultural standards along with the average standard of merit of the students of that state. The syllabus for school in that state is decided by the state board authority and the mode of instruction is either in English or in the regional language of the respective state. That usually depends on the factors of society of that particular state to determine the first language as well as the principal language for Curriculum transactions. While CBSE prefers to deliver education based on national parameters, almost all state boards are focused on a general basis, to cater to all the students of that state- equal educational opportunities.

## 2. Literature Review:

Rita Kothari (2015)<sup>2</sup> conducted a study on curriculum education where it has been found that a vibrant phase of translation and transformation of English language is going through across India. Meenu Madan (2016)<sup>3</sup> conducted a study where it has been found that English is important to teach and develop knowledge on multimedia. That study has also highlighted the importance of multimedia for the development of social life and students' life, in particular. Venu Mehta (2016)<sup>4</sup> conducted a study where the foci have been the role played by the teachers, their techniques of teaching, their limitations on the way of teaching etc. Neelam Dogra (2016)<sup>5</sup> conducted a study where the importance of classroom management, classroom behavior management and the effectiveness of the teacher in all that were studied in greater details. A. Chandra (2016)<sup>6</sup> conducted a study where it has been found that quality of teaching and the development of students at any level depend on the quality of the students as well as the teachers also. So, to develop the quality of teaching-learning process, a teacher should have to be efficient enough. U.D. Pradhan (2017)<sup>7</sup> conducted a study on "A critical study of the teaching of English at 2 stage in Maharashtra retrospect and prospect" where the origin of the English language study, along with its development and the importance of its growth through the years have been studied. Anshu Narad (2016)<sup>8</sup> conducted a study on "Study of personal values of senior secondary students in relation to school environment and home environment." In that study, it has been found that moral values, that are established directly or indirectly by the society, can be inculcated through various institutions like - schools, home, library, religious places etc. Manidipa

Ray (2017)<sup>9</sup>, conducted a study where it has been found that the pressure of the competition among the students now-a-days are affecting their social, moral and mental developments. Debapriya Chakraborty (2017)<sup>10</sup> conducted a study on "Curriculum and gender a sociological investigation of secondary education in West Bengal." There, gender wise inequalities in the educational institutions have been studied in a greater detail. Mg Quibria and Ted Tschang (2001)<sup>11</sup> conducted a study on "Information and communication technology and poverty: an Asian perspective". There, an in-depth study has been conducted to find out the importance of use of ICT in the Asian society in improving the economic status in the society. Ravinder Rena (2007)<sup>12</sup> conducted the study where the main foci have been the issue about the rapid changes within the society, their changing demands, and finally the issue about the interrelationships among society, education, and gender. Zhang Xiohong (2009)<sup>13</sup> conducted a study which showed the importance of teaching English as a foreign language to develop economic-, political- and social standards at the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Jaap Dronkers and Rolf Van Der Velden and Allison Dunne (2012)<sup>14</sup> reported a study where the main feature of the paper discussed about the estimation of the combined effects of educational systems, school composition, track level, and country of origin on the educational achievements. Giray Berberoglu and Aysit Tansel (2014)<sup>15</sup> documented a study where the importance of private tutoring for any national and international level of examination was discussed.

<sup>2</sup>Rita Kothari (2015). Indian Literature in English translation the social context. Gujarat University, Department of English.

<sup>3</sup>Meenu Madan (2016).<sup>3</sup>Effectiveness of multimedia teaching programmes for teaching of English. Department of Education. [<http://hdl.handler.net/10603/112450>].

<sup>4</sup>Venu Mehta (2016).<sup>4</sup>Developing materials for literature education to orient learners towards multiculturalism at the intermediate level.

<sup>5</sup>Neelam Dogra (2016). Effect of training in content development strategies upon classroom communication behaviour patterns.

<sup>6</sup>A. Chandra (2016)<sup>6</sup>The effects of selective models of teaching in teaching history at diploma in teacher education level.

<sup>7</sup>U D Pradhan (2017)<sup>7</sup>. A critical study of the teaching of English at 2 stage in Maharashtra retrospect and prospect.

<sup>8</sup>AnshuNarad (2016)<sup>8</sup>.Study of personal values of senior secondary students in relation to school environment and home environment.

<sup>9</sup>Manidipa Ray (2017)<sup>9</sup>. A study of the relationship between competition in academic achievement and moral and social development of secondary school students.

<sup>10</sup>Debapriya Chakraborty (2017).<sup>10</sup>Curriculum and gender a sociological investigation of secondary education in West Bengal.

<sup>11</sup>Mg Quibria and Ted Tschang (2001)<sup>11</sup>. Information and communication technology and poverty: an Asian perspective

<sup>12</sup>Ravinder Rena (2007)<sup>12</sup>. Educational breakthrough in Eritrea: some expectations and outcomes

<sup>13</sup>Zhang Xiohong (2009)<sup>13</sup>. A great leap forward: EFL curriculum.

<sup>14</sup>Jaap Dronkers and Rolf van der Velden and Allison Dunne (2012).Why the migrant students better off in certain type of educational systems or schools than in others?

<sup>15</sup>Giray Berberoglu and Aysit Tansel (2014)<sup>15</sup>. Does private tutoring increase student's academic performance? Evidence from Turkey. (pp.:1-12).

### 3. Objectives of the Study:

Following were the objectives in performing this study:

- A. To compare between the curricular contents of the secondary level English Textbooks of CBSE and WBBSE.
- B. To compare between the scopes of language development through different parts of the curricula in English Textbooks of CBSE and WBBSE.

### 4. Research Questions:

On the bases of the objectives stated above, following research questions were considered:

- A. How do the CBSE and WBBSE have designed their Secondary level English curricula?
- B. Which of the two boards provide more opportunities to develop English language amongst the Secondary Level learners through their Secondary level English Curricula?
- C. Which of the two boards emphasize more to make the students interested in English language?
- D. What are the remarkable benefits of these two curricula?

### 5. Research Methodology:

It is a qualitative narrative research. Qualitative research methods are designed in such a manner that it helps to reveal the behavior and perception of any target audience on a particular topic. There are different types of qualitative research methods like an in-depth interview, focus group, ethnographic research, content analysis, case study research etc. Qualitative research methods are more descriptive by nature, and the result can be drawn easily from the collective form of data. Here all the data have been collected either from the relevant textbooks or other related research papers from different sources which have been mentioned at relevant places.

#### 5.1. Research Design:



**Figure -1: The Research Design adopted in the study**

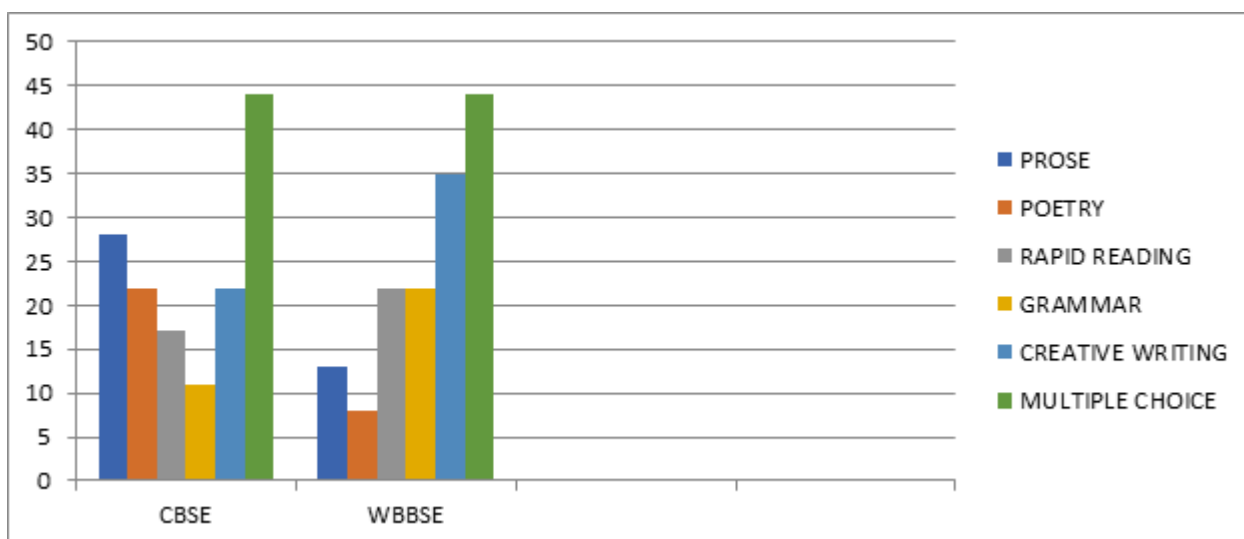
The basic research design that has been followed in the study is diagrammatically represented in the **Figure-1** where the diagram is self-explanatory.

#### 5.2. Collection of Information:

The entire study has been done by critically analysing the curricula from the two different boards – CBSE and WBBSE.

#### 5.3. Analysis of Collected Data:

The Secondary Level English curricular contents of both the CBSE and the WBBSE were analysed fundamentally with respect to the content distribution and diversity in the textbook contents. Different teaching methodologies that are normally adopted by the teachers to teach English at the Secondary Level in the two different boards i.e., the WBBSE and the CBSE to provide opportunities to develop the Secondary Level students' English language competency through the different Curricular transactional methods are also analyzed.



**Figure 2: Analyzed data chart**

## 6. Results:

The results from the aforesaid content analysis have been briefly discussed below.

### A. Content Distribution

In CBSE class 9 English textbook<sup>16</sup> there are 19 lessons including 10 prose and 9 poetries, along with grammar, writing articles/descriptive paragraph and short story writing. Among the prose there are 1 science fiction and 1 biography while the rest are stories. In CBSE class 10 English textbook there are 11 prose and 11 poetries.

The textbook contains 3 basic parts namely:

- Reading skills,
- Writing skills with grammar, and
- Literature and extended reading text.

It also contains a factual passage, a descriptive passage, formal letter writing/ inquiry/ placing order/ letter to the editor/article, writing short story based on an outline.

On the other hand - in the WBBSE class 9 (first language) textbook<sup>17</sup> there are 11 prose and 5 poetries. Among them there is 1 novel and 1 series of poems. In the WBBSE class 9 (second language) textbook there are 8 prose and 4 poetries.

For the first language learners, under the WBBSE, they have arranged the contents through their evaluation system in such a way so that 28% questions are set from prose section, 22% questions are set from poetry section, 17% questions are set from rapid reader section and only 11% questions are set for grammar section while 22% questions are set to evaluate creative writing abilities of the Secondary Level students. On the other hand, 44% of the total number of items are multiple choice questions and very short type questions.

For the second language learners, under the WBBSE, they have arranged the contents through their evaluation system in such a way so that 13% questions are set from prose section, 8% questions are set from poetry section, 22% questions are set from rapid reader section and only 22% questions are set for grammar section while 35% questions are set to evaluate creative writing abilities of the Secondary Level students. Here also, 44% of the total number of items are multiple choice questions and very short type questions.

<sup>16</sup>Beehive Textbook in English for Class IX. National Council of Educational Research and Training.

<sup>17</sup> BLISS English Textbook for Class IX Second Language. West Bengal Board of Secondary Education.



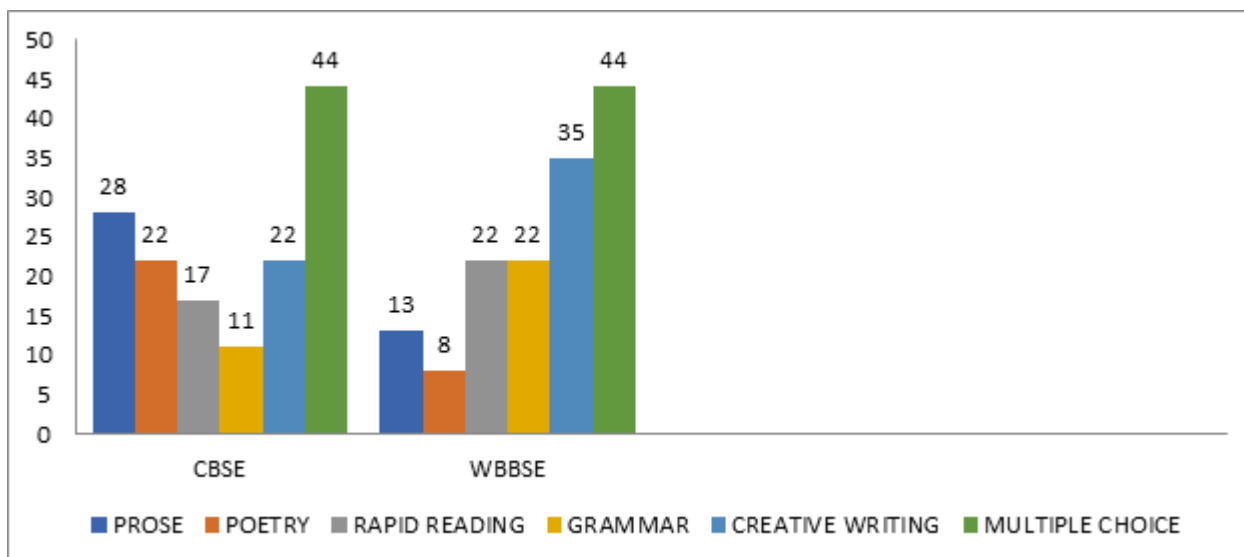


Figure 3: content distribution

### B. Diversity in the textbook contents

Both the curricula contain prose, poetry, rapid reading, grammar and creative writing portions along with multiple choice questions to enrich the Secondary Level students' ability and encourage their overall developments. However, a comparison of the English textbooks of Class - IX of the WBBSE [for English as Second Language learners] and the CBSE from curricular perspective is presented in a tabular fashion below:

**Table – 1: Tabular Comparison of the English textbooks of Class - IX of the WBBSE and the CBSE from curricular perspective**

Areas analysed	WBBSE [English as Second Language]	CBSE
<i>A. Identification of data</i>		
Title of the textbook	<i>Bliss</i>	<i>Beehive</i>
Number of Prose	8	10
Number of Poetries	4	9
<i>B. Genre</i>		
Prose containing part in the textbook	67%	53%
Poetry containing part in the textbook	33%	47%

### C. Adopted teaching methodologies to teach English at the Secondary Level

Under the WBBSE, English teachers follow the traditional lecture and translation method. The fundamental difficulties of teaching English under this Board are large classes, cultural disparity amongst the students and lack of professional training among the teachers. Normally teaching aids are not found to be used in the schools under this Board for teaching English at the Secondary Level. On the contrary, in the schools under the CBSE Board – it is generally observed that the English teachers use different innovative ideas to teach their Secondary Level students like - group works, seminars, outdoor activities, team works etc.

### D. Curricular analyses regarding scopes provided to develop interest in English language learning at the Secondary Level

As already discussed, for the first language learners under the WBBSE - 22% questions are set to evaluate creative writing abilities and for the second language learners under the WBBSE - 37% questions are set to

evaluate creative writing abilities of the Secondary Level students. As a result, students have the scopes to get enough experience under the WBBSE that helps them, in turn, to become interested in English Language learning.

### 7. Findings:

Some dominant characteristics of the two Secondary Level English curricula analysed are enlisted below.

#### A. In CBSE English textbooks:

Variation of themes is good enough;

- the themes of the lessons of the poetry and prose are relevant to the age of the students;
- most of the lessons are interesting with different variations within the same textbook;
- the text contains different types of prose such as novel, short stories, stories, drama, fiction and biography; and
- the interest levels of the lessons have been increased by questionnaires.

- B. In WBBSE English textbooks:
- variations of themes are not good enough;
  - the themes of the lessons of the poetry and the prose are relevant to the age of the students;
  - maximum lessons are interesting in the way of presentation and their themes are also interesting enough;
  - the variation in the types of the proses are not wide enough - there are only stories and fictions; and
  - reflections of different type of values are not enough to encourage the Secondary Level students to inculcate them.

## 8. Conclusions:

A curriculum is the base of any child's educational development. Choosing the right board for providing school level education to children is vital so that they can get proper and effective education. In India, parents have to choose between a Central Board or a State Board for this purpose. They usually choose it based on their academic knowledge and economic conditions. Sometimes it varies based on their language preferences, availability of the schools, transport system, social status etc. In this context, through this study documented here, the basic difference of their curriculum, evaluation procedures, teaching strategies, medium of language used for English curriculum transaction etc. of the CBSE and WBBSE have been compared. Provisions for the development of interests in English Language learning at the Secondary Level by the curricula under the two Boards are also analysed.

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